

## ANNAMITE CIVILIZATION

Economic resources. Local opposition and the Company's financial status, however, annulled the commercial efficacy of his task, but not the general usefulness of the information he gathered. It was Poivre who later became Pigneau de Behaine's champion, by getting for him what slight recognition that famous missionary received, when he returned to France to put through an alliance with the exiled king of Cochin-China. The paper treaty with Nguyen Anh which Louis XVI made he later rescinded, after Pigneau had sailed away fondly believing his mission to have been successful. When he got to Pondichery not only was he not aided by the Governor there, as he had been led to expect, but his project was definitely opposed. After heartbreaking delays, Pigneau was forced to recruit, as a private enterprise, as many of the young Frenchmen in Pondichery as were willing to risk their lives and fortunes in the dubious venture of placing Nguyen Anh upon the throne of Cochin-China. With these reinforcements Pigneau was able to obtain for Nguyen Anh an eventual triumph in 1802, which made him Gia-long, emperor not only of his patrimonial estates but of all the Annamite-speaking peoples. Gia-long received the imperial investiture of China, treated with Siam as an equal, and reduced Cambodia and Laos to the position of semi-vassal states. In regard to internal administration, the French officers helped him to build up a dynasty and an organization so remarkable that it is still partially in active use.

Gia-long was agreeably conscious of the non-official character of the aid he had received from the French. His benevolence towards the individual officers who had been instrumental in winning his victory

was unbounded, but he made it clear that such awards were for their personal use and not to serve as an opening for their country's commerce. Upon his death, his son Minh Mang politely asked these officers who were still living in Annam to leave the country. He marked their departure by beginning a persecution of their compatriot missionaries and of their native converts. Worse violence was done them by the Emperor Thieu-Tri (1841-47)<sup>0</sup> be followed by even greater excesses on the part of Tu-Duc, his successor. Ironically enough, it was this effort to rid the country of missionaries that precipitated the French conquest—exactly what these emperors had been trying to avoid.

During the Second Empire, France sent warships to Annam upon several occasions to protest the treatment of her missionaries, but the concessions wrung from Hue merely meant the renewal of persecutions as soon as the fleet had sailed away. The number of French and Spanish